THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) There are a total of 35575 telephone subscribers in Manipur as on 30.6.2002.

(b) No, Sir. At present 32 Sub-Divisions out of 34 and 32 Tehsils out of 63 and 30 Block Headquarters out of 34 have been provided with telephone facility.

(c) There are a total of 5720 applications in hand with subscription fees paid (waiting list as on 30.6.2002). There is no application pending alongwith unpaid subscription fee.

(d) Switching capacity, external plant and transmission system are being augmented.

Introduction of contract system in telephone exchanges

†896. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to introduce contract system in the telephone exchanges;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any action so far, in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir. There is no contract system in telephone exchanges. They are commissioned, operated and maintained by departmental staff. However, contract system has existed for the work of laying cable. This system has never been discontinued.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.